

### SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Requesting the forest service to address the forest health and wildfire risk crisis facing the Black Hills.

WHEREAS, an epidemic of bark beetles has already killed approximately 485,000 trees in the Black Hills National Forest and continues to spread throughout the forest; and

WHEREAS, the United States General Accounting Office Report to the House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health, GAO/RCED-99-65, stated in 1999 that, "The most extensive and serious problem related to the health of the national forests and forestlands in the interior West is the over-accumulation of vegetation"; and

WHEREAS, the beetle epidemic and chronic over-stocking has resulted in dangerously high fuel loading and subsequent risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Black Hills National Forest; and

WHEREAS, catastrophic wildfire risk across the Black Hills National Forest endangers the city of Sturgis, and numerous other communities, residents, residences, businesses, historic landmarks, livelihoods, and general public safety; and

WHEREAS, catastrophic wildfire risk across the Black Hills National Forest endangers the maintenance of all the forest's multiple-uses for all its multiple-users as mandated by the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 and the National Forest Management Act of 1976; and

WHEREAS, the USDA Forest Service announced in 1997 its commitment to resolve wildfire risks on National Forests by fiscal year 2015; and

WHEREAS, the completion of the Phase II Amendment to the Black Hills National Forest Plan is essential to enabling the forest to undertake large-scale fuel load reduction treatments; and

WHEREAS, the Settlement Agreement for Civil Action No. 99-N-2173, to which the USDA Forest Service was a party, states that, "Phase II is anticipated to be completed in 2002," leading to a public expectation that the Phase II Amendment would actually be finished in 2002:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Seventy-seventh Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the South Dakota State Legislature beseeches the USDA Forest Service to rapidly address the forest health and wildfire risk crisis facing the Black Hills and endangering its residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota State Legislature beseeches the USDA Forest Service to expeditiously complete the Phase II Amendment to the Forest Plan, no later than the end of 2002; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota State Legislature is committed to assisting the USDA Forest Service in their procurement of whatever resources are necessary to achieve these ends.

Adopted by the Senate,  
Concurred in by the House of Representatives,

January 29, 2002  
January 31, 2002

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Carole Hillard  
President of the Senate

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Patricia Adam  
Secretary of the Senate

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Scott Eccarius  
Speaker of the House

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Karen Gerdes  
Chief Clerk of the House